

## **Put Your Head On My Shoulder** by [EvieSmallwood](#)

**Series:** [the tales of short stack and string bean \[3\]](#)

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**Summary:**

This is love, in its purest and simplest form.

## 1. One

### Author's Note:

- For .

This might be the fluffiest thing I've ever written. It's for Hannah, because I can't get enough of her writing and her mileven is on point. If y'all haven't boarded the Everybody Talks train... woah. Get on it. Now.

*Put your head on my shoulder  
Hold me in your arms, baby  
Squeeze me oh-so-tight  
Show me that you love me too*

---

It's half past ten and his friends are clearing out; Dustin lunges for the last bag of chips (which is probably stale by now), Lucas and Max bicker while Will tries to stop it from turning into an all-out argument. It's so familiar, so normal.

But it's also like ten times better, because *El*'s here.

It's the first time she's ever been to his house—like, as an actual invited guest. She's not a secret. He doesn't have to shove his pockets with leftovers just to make sure she's fed and worry about the best way to keep her safe.

El is putting her things in her backpack. She'd been working on an English assignment while they played. He still feels bad about continuing the campaign without her in it, even if she'd said it was okay.

“Did you finish?”

She glances up, looking a little less stressed than she had when she'd first come running down the steps to his basement. “Sort of,” she says. “I still need to proofread, but that won't take long.”

He nods, biting his lip. El returns her pencils to their case and snaps

the button closed. It makes him jump, for whatever reason. “You wanna go to Benny’s tomorrow? Get a bite?”

“I can’t,” she stands, throwing her bag over her shoulder. “I have to study for that history test.”

There’s a bitter edge to her tone that Mike isn’t exactly familiar with, and so he moves a little closer, acting on almost pure instinct itself and gently brushes the strap of her book bag off her shoulder. It falls to the floor with a thud. She *lets* it. Eyes on him, and only him. There’s a magnetic intensity hovering in the space around them. It strengthens when they’re like this, but it never really goes away.

“Hey,” he says, because *here she is*, all brown eyes and flushed cheeks and hands on his waist; gone is the stressed out mask of the average high school student. “You’ll be okay.”

El swallows. “I thought school was going to be fun,” she tells him. “And it is. Sometimes. I just... I miss *learning*. I feel like all we do is repeat the same stuff over and over.” She sighs. “I miss being able to do this stuff in my *pajamas*.”

Mike grins. He thinks back to all those times when they’d studied in the cabin; her in one of those sweaters he and Nancy had passed down, worn while she hunched over a notebook with a furrowed brow.

“I miss *you*,” is what she says next, and it makes his heart skip a beat when her arm curls around his neck and she comes closer. “I’m always studying. It sucks.”

“Yeah,” he can’t focus on anything but her lips. *What sucks?* “It does suck.”

El rolls her eyes, and that’s all it takes. He pulls her in and kisses her; slow and first, how it always starts, lips just brushing and then colliding and then moving; a steady, reliant escalation that never fails to absolutely *kill* him.

Her fingers rake through his hair, *oh shit*. The smallest sigh escapes him when they break apart for a brief second, before going back at it

again. She smiles through it at first.

Mike presses little kisses to her jawline, and she starts to laugh. It *always* makes her laugh, and he loves that. He loves the way she has to stand on her tip toes to do this. He loves that her hand is sort of under his shirt right now, her fingers cold against the skin of his hip. They move away quickly, though. None of this ever lasts too long—they always wake up, remember they’re only fifteen, maybe they shouldn’t go this fast. Maybe he *shouldn’t* be trying to give her the smallest hickey known to man, right on her collarbone (no one would *see*).

“What were you saying?”

El blinks, face breaking out into a grin. Her lip gloss is practically gone. Mike swipes a sleeve over his mouth just to be safe. Last time he forgot had been *embarrassing*. “I don’t remember.”

“Something about...” another kiss to her neck, because *why not, who’s here, who cares?* “Missing me?”

She nods eagerly, tapping his shoulder with the palm of her hand, meaning he should probably stop. “Yeah, that. I miss you.”

“Uh huh,” *Seriously.* (*Last one*) *Mike.* (*One more*). “So go to Benny’s with me, I’ll do your homework.”

“*Mike.*”

“What? It’s not like you need to know that stuff.” *Last one I swear to god.*

“I do to pass the class,” she reminds him, but her irritation melts away every time he kisses her neck. He can *feel* that happening. How *cool*.

Mike finally rips himself back, going against every force of nature and whatever the hell else. “I have notes,” he tells her. “You can study them. You can do that every time if you need, so you don’t have to make them.”

She looks like he just gave her the moon.

*Mike: 1*

*Mr. Wallace: 0*

*Suck my ass, World History.*

“Seriously?”

“Yeah, seriously,” he says, wrapping his arms around her waist. “Seriously anything. Seriously I’ll do every assignment you have for the whole year, for the three after that. Seriously I’ll buy you a coke tomorrow—“ a kiss, a laugh, “I’ll like, marry you. Have your babies.”

El snorts. “You can’t have my babies.”

Mike raises a brow. “Anything for you.”

She grabs his face and makes him look at her, exasperated and all ruffled up and red and perfect. *Wow.* “That would mean a lot to me. Thank you.”

He nods, serious. “Anything for you,” he repeats, firmer this time.

She looks down at her shoes—when had she started *standing* on his? “I still have to do that math packet though,” she mutters. “I forgot.”

Her head slumps against his chest. Mike lets his fingers tangle through her hair, relishing in the softness of it; curly, longer, a little frizzy from a long day and the nervous habit of flipping it she’d developed. “I’m sorry,” he says, genuinely meaning it.

“It’s okay,” she plays with the tag on his shirt. “I just wish I could spend more time alone with you. Five minutes before class isn’t enough.”

He knows what she means. *God, does he.* Being without El is almost like having a constant craving, and it’s so rarely fulfilled these days. He’s found himself aggressively counting down the days until summer vacation. He can’t wait for days spent lying on the couch doing nothing, with her. It’s gonna be great.

He takes her hands, though. “We can do fun stuff now,” he says.

She gives him a challenging look. “Like what?”

“Like... dancing,” he laces their fingers together, his right hand and her left, and then goes for her waist again with the other. “Dancing is super fun.”

“Yeah, if you know how,” she puts her other hand on his shoulder anyway. “I still suck at it.”

“Do *not*. You’re great at literally everything. There’s nothing you can’t do.”

“I can’t give birth to tomatoes.”

A beat, and then they burst into laughter. “*What?*”

“Well, it’s true,” she grins. They’re swaying, lightly. A thought seems to occur to her. With a twitch of her head, the radio in the corner is switched on. Some soft song from the ‘50s plays. Mike thinks it might be Paul Anka.

Mike rests his forehead in the crook of her neck, and she does the same to him. They curl into each other, pieces that fit and always will.

*Put your lips next to mine, dear  
Won't you kiss me once, baby?  
Just a kiss goodnight, maybe  
You and I will fall in love (you and I will fall in love)*

## 2. Two

*People say that love's a game  
A game you just can't win  
If there's a way  
I'll find it somebody  
And then this fool will rush in*

---

It's one in the morning.

At least, that's what her watch reads. Really, it's Mike's watch, but he'd let her borrow it before third period on Thursday and she still hasn't given it back.

Crickets chirp, and a few houses on the cul-de-sac have their sprinklers running. It's a peaceful sort of setting. She feels comforted by the sounds; so different from the hooting of owls and growls of random animals—all normal nighttime sounds for the cabin.

The Wheeler lawn is slick wet. She almost slips, but she steadies herself in time; planting her sneakers firm against the grass and using just the slightest mental pull to tug her rightward.

The windows are dark, of course. El doesn't even know if Nancy's home. She bites her lip, weighing her options (basement door, maybe?) before making a decision.

It takes quite a bit of effort and one nosebleed to get onto the ledge that leads to Nancy's window. Like she'd hoped, the bed is empty. El twitches her head again and the lock is undone. She wipes her nose and slips in, careful not to make too much noise.

The room smells like perfume and cigarettes and the faintest hint of weed. It's like Nancy, Steve, and Jonathan are in the room with her. But they're not. They're all out, probably together.

El walks down the darkened hallway and presses her ear to Mike's door. There's music playing—a low volume, a soft song. He always sleeps with something on. He hates silence.

She makes her way inside, doing her best to avoid the mess on the floor; sweaters, textbooks, comics, sci-fi novels, broken pencils, and trash. The door closes behind her with the lightest thud. If Mrs. Wheeler has heard anything at all, she'll just assume it was one of her kids getting up to use the bathroom.

There he is—sprawled out on his bed with his hair a total mess and his face pressed into the pillow. There's a book that's half on his back and half on the mattress. The covers are all tangled together.

She gets closer; close enough to see the freckles on his nose, which stand out starkly. Everything is bathed in a moonlit glow.

She's never seen him in this light, she realises. Nighttime spring light; white and fresh and crisp, but shadowed, too. It makes his dark features darker and his light features almost luminescent.

El closes the book and sets it aside before sitting down on the edge of the bed. She shakes his shoulder lightly. "Mike."

He twitches, brow furrowing together before relaxing. She does it again. "Mike. It's me."

Mike's eyes seem to rip open. She watches them adjust. He inhales sharply, wiping sleep from his eyes and leaning away a little. "*Whatchadoinhere?*"

"I missed you," she says, which isn't a lie. It's been like two whole weeks since they've spent any time alone together. It had been that which prompted her late night walk... and also the worst dream of all time.

Mike lets his arm fall away from his face. He tilts his head, studying her. She can't hide anything from him.

"Nightmares," is all she can manage. She doesn't want to talk about the rest just yet.

He nods and then scoots over, patting the mattress. She loves that he doesn't even question it. This is the first time she's ever snuck into his room and frankly, compared with the story Max had shared with her when the redhead had done it to Lucas, he's handling it like a pro.

El kicks off her sneakers (they land with a thud and they both wince, glancing at the door and waiting), before letting herself curl up on top of the bed with him.

It's warm—sharing a bed with a person. Warmer than just sleeping alone. She doesn't even need a blanket.

Or maybe she's just blushing. Her face feels like it might be on fire.

Mike is looking at her when she opens her eyes. He doesn't say anything, just leans over her (her heart is beating so loud, *god*) and grabs the glass of water from his nightstand. He downs half in maybe two seconds and then offers it to her.

“No thanks.”

“Okay.”

It's set back down, but he doesn't move away. He stays there, resting on an elbow, staring. She wonders if he can hear what she's thinking.

“You wanna talk about it?”

*Oh. “I...”* she bites her lip. “It was just... Papa. Bad stuff. From before.”

Mike nods. He pushes some hair from her eyes which she'd been about to blow away. How he manages that; sensing what she needs and when she needs it, knowing what to say, how to handle things—she doesn't know.

“You okay, now?”

“Yeah.” *Now. Here. With you. Everything is perfect.*

Mike nods again, before leaning down and pressing a kiss to her forehead. She lets her hands curl around his shirt, though, and it doesn't allow much space between them.

“Need something else?”

His eyebrow is raised, and half of that question is maybe genuine, but

the other half is what makes her grin. She kisses him before he can blink, harder and more openly than she ever has before. She doesn't usually initiate; it's not a strong suit and it's led to more than one reddened forehead—but this time, he almost falls on top of her. It's the most amazing feeling of all time.

“El—” he draws back and sucks in a breathe. “Listen, I don’t mean to kill the mood—”

She’s not fully listening, now letting her hands go *under* his shirt (new territory, all instinct, soft skin, *oh god wow*). She’s kissing his ear. She’s never done that before, either. New, new, new.

“But like, *huhhh*,” he shivers, and it makes her giggle. They both pause sharply and he presses a hand over her mouth—before quickly ripping it away. He regains his balance. “We’re in my bed,” he says after a minute of heart-pounding silence.

“Yeah,” she tugs on him. “Come back.”

“We’re in my bed, though, El,” he says it while obliging. “And it’s night. And we’re alone. And this is like, illegal.”

“It is *not*.”

“It is when your dad is in charge of this whole town.”

“He so isn’t.”

“Well he has a gun.”

“We’re not *doing* anything, though.”

Mike’s eyes widen. “No, I know, of course not,” he nods eagerly, “but like... what if people think?”

“I’ll leave before anyone else wakes up,” she promises (it doesn’t end up that way). “No one will see.” (Nancy sees)

Mike nods. “Okay,” he says. “Well... maybe we shouldn’t...”

*Don’t say it.*

“Do this. Right now.”

*Ugh.*

“I mean, I want to, I just... would also like to live to see next Tuesday, y’know?”

El’s shoulder’s slump. She almost wants to ask for five more minutes, like she does when she’s desperate for more sleep. She doesn’t want to snap out of this moment, this dream. It’s so good.

Mike seems to sense that, because his lips come to meet her own one more time before his hand wraps around her waist and pulls her into his side.

El breathes him in, so close; detergent and boy, and that cheap cologne Steve had advised him to start wearing around her. It’s not the worst, and she doesn’t really mind the addition to his usual familiar aroma. Just another distinction to pick out the Mike sweaters from her normal ones back in her own bedroom.

His hair tickles her forehead but she is *not* going to flick it away. This is almost as good as kissing him—maybe it’s better, she can’t decide. She loves that his hand is on her waist and it’s not going anywhere, and that she can wrap her own around him, hold him, for a whole night.

The song on the radio plays out into something else, something familiar. It makes her smile. She lays and listens to it, and his heart beat.

*Put your head on my shoulder  
Whisper in my ear, baby  
Words I want to hear  
Tell me, tell me that you love me too (tell me that you love me too)*

“I love you,” she whispers.

Mike’s eyes meet her own in the dark. “I love you, too, short stack.”

**Notes for the Chapter:**

Short stack? Like short stack of eggos? Like smol and tol? Anyone?

anyway I hope you guys enjoyed this! I had a ridiculously fun time writing it, so.

:~)

**Author's Note:**

This fic is inspired by Paul Anka's Put Your Head On My Shoulder (if you couldn't tell). It's ALSO inspired by a stranger things crack video on YouTube which completely wrecked me because I was laughing one second and crying the next, so. Blame that.

It was so cute it made me explode.

There's a part two to this already written! I'll post ASAP! (like literally tomorrow morning I'm just tired it's time for SLEEP I can't edit in this state)

Ok bye.